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Marginal Column

By ALAN RICHMAN

THE first shelling by atomic artillery at Yucca Flats in Nevada on Tuesday, the 26th American atomic detonation, illustrates that America's research in atomic weapons has moved a stage further ahead. The shelling was the first of a series of tests which the Atomic Energy Commission conducts, and which now occur with the regularity of a grim sporting event, have each been concerned with a particular aspect of atomic weapons, and the purpose of the present series is to examine the effects of atomic artillery shells. The last of the series of tests was an atomic shell fired from the 200-millimeter gun designed for the purpose, and timed to explode at a given height above the ground. The first test was made with a bomb of about four-fifths of the power of this dropped on Hiroshima and detonated from a 100 metre tower to simulate a shell detonated above the ground. It underlined the obvious, that the atomic shell is a weapon that can be used only with considerable care and preparation.

THE 1800 troops who were in deep all trenches some two miles away from "ground zero" last week's test were totally unharmed, and their commander has estimated that at that distance they would probably have suffered no casualties even if the face of the shell had been "top-hatted". But clearly they could not have been much closer, so that the use of atomic artillery in an infantry battle where the troops of both sides are in close contact seems to be ruled out. And not only infantry, for a heavily-armed tank, equipped with a 200 metre range from the explosion was ripped to pieces.

BUT there was another purpose to demonstrate the effects of even a relatively modest atomic explosion on houses and cars, and, by so doing, to try and arouse greater American public interest in civil defence. Two standard houses had been built at about 1,500 and 2,500 metres from the explosion. The closer was lightly demolished, the further one was badly cracked and damaged, and the dummy inhabitants above the level of the ceiling were so badly injured as to have no doubt as to what would happen to real people.

DEFENSE is a great deal of hard work, and enthusiasm from private groups in the American civil defence programme is still a very modest affair. The Federal Government has been unable to persuade Congress to authorize more than a fraction of the money spent on military defence, and the various States and cities have not done much better. But no deep-seated programme, the strength of the defence is no higher than the absolute minimum, and although a radar chain is being constructed to cover Canada and the United States, it is only in skeleton form. These shortcomings have been underlined not only by the effects of the explosion in Nevada, but by the revelation that an effective defence of the United States against atomic attack would require colossal expenditure.

ACCORDING to the *Alloy* brothers, the well-known commentators of the *New York Herald Tribune*, who are always well-informed on defence questions, a report has been submitted to President Eisenhower which estimates that it would cost between \$16 and \$20,000,000 to provide the United States with an effective air defence programme, and that the development of Russian air strength and atomic weapons makes it imperative that such a programme should be undertaken within the next two years. This poses a very serious problem for President Eisenhower, for it means an end to hope of reducing the budget even if the expense were spread over more than a two years period.

Washington, March 28.

Knesset Adopts '53-'54 Estimates By 48-13 Vote

THE IL218,330,000 revenue estimates of the 1953-'54 budget were adopted by 48 to 13 votes in the Knesset yesterday. No changes were made in the Estimates in the committee stage. Following the vote Herut, the Communists and the Left Faction introduced motions of non-confidence which were defeated. A spokesman for Mapam said that his party had expressed its lack of confidence in the Government by voting against the budget.

The House worked under great pressure in order to finish its business before rising for the Passover recess and the voting procedure was chaotic. In the interest of speed, Members moving amendments were asked to defend all their motions in one speech. The Chairman of the Finance Committee opposing each one by a vote in the House. Under the streamlined procedure adopted for the occasion the House succeeded in voting down all 388 proposed amendments in something over half an hour.

Communist Harangue
The Knesset worked through its dinner break though it had to wait a quarter of an hour until mimeographed sheets of amendments were ready. The Finance Committee finished its own reading of the estimates only a short time before the session opened. However, the Knesset had to spend an hour hearing a Communist protest against the House Committee which had refused to consider the Communist non-confidence motion. In an urgent matter, Miss E. Vilensky alleged a breach of Knesset procedure which lays down that a motion of non-confidence has priority over any other business of the House.

Mr. D. Ben Zvi, Chairman of the House Committee, said that Miss Vilensky could move her resolution after the budget debate - which she did. Her motion was connected with the reparations agreement.

Protecting the budget against the Communist motion, Mr. Z. Ben Zvi, Chairman of the Finance Committee, said that the Government was not prepared to consider the Communist motion. He called for a vote on the motion. Mr. Z. Ben Zvi said that the Government was not prepared to consider the Communist motion. He called for a vote on the motion.

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Myerson Hopes Russia May Permit Jews to Go

UNITED NATIONS, Wednesday (GNA). — The hope that as a result of current U.N. discussions on Communism and anti-Semitism, the Soviet Government and the satellites may allow those Jews, who so wish, to leave for Israel, was expressed by Mrs. Golda Myerson, Israel Minister of Labour, here today.

Sharett-like Meeting Expected in April

TEL AVIV, Wednesday. — Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett will spend 10 days in the U.S. before starting his month's tour of Latin America. He is due to leave Israel for New York on April 2.

No definite plans for his U.S. visit have yet been made but it is understood that he will hold discussions with Ambassador Abba Eban and the staff of the Israel Embassy. He will probably meet State Department officials and it is thought possible that he may also seek an interview with President Eisenhower, but details are still being worked out in Washington.

Mr. Sharett is due in the Argentine on April 13 and will stay there for nine days before going on to Chile where he is due on April 22. He will be in Brazil from May 3 to May 10.

Arab States Complain To PCC on Property

UNITED NATIONS, Wednesday (Reuters). — Six Arab delegations yesterday called on the Palestine Conciliation Commission to put an "immediate end" to the alleged sale by Israel of property belonging to Arab refugees.

They said that property worth millions of pounds sterling was involved in a memorandum presented to the Commission and to the United Nations Secretary-General, the delegations of Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen. They said that Israel was disposing of the private property of Arab refugees and was diverting the proceeds to "financing the influx of Jewish refugees arriving from abroad."

The memorandum said that the transactions were unlawful and therefore null and void. It was asserted that Israel was responsible for the destitution of Arab refugees and could not rightfully regard them as absentee landlords. The memorandum said that Arab refugees had always insisted on their return to their homes, farms and plantations.

The Conciliation Commission was asked to intervene with Israel, and the six delegations requested that they be kept informed of the Commission's efforts to halt Israel violations in this respect.

Better Service for Higher Fares

The Ministry of Communications yesterday published the terms of the agreement for higher fares which will take effect after the cooperatives sign the conditions contained regarding service improvements.

The agreement provides for a 15 per cent fare increase, a 5 per cent of which will go to a reserve fund to be used to cover additional expenditures arising out of higher costs.

Eshkol Introduces Interim Budget On Development

A bill to authorize the Finance Minister to spend IL17m. of the proposed Development Budget during April and May passed to the committee stage yesterday and is expected to be adopted today.

Finance Minister Levi Eshkol, who introduced the bill, said its purpose was to fill the gap before the complete Development Budget is adopted, and pointed out that IL17m. is much less than one-sixth of the annual figure.

The Development Budget had not been introduced as yet he explained, because important sources of income such as reparations and the property tax were approved only this week.

The Finance Minister said that the Government was not prepared to wait for the complete Development Budget to be adopted, and pointed out that IL17m. is much less than one-sixth of the annual figure.

Loans for Parched Negev Settlements

Fifty Negev settlements affected by the drought will receive a IL1m. loan from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Jewish Agency jointly. Mr. Y. Eshkol, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, announced in the Knesset yesterday in answer to a question put by Mr. M.J. Chazani (Hapoel Hamizrabi).

The most recent estimate of the damage caused by the drought stands at about IL4m. and the Treasury will have to spend an additional ILm. to purchase grain from abroad, it was learned from the Ministry of Agriculture yesterday.

The damage to the winter crop amounted to 20-25,000 tons of grain fodder which would have supplied the country for one and a half months and which will now have to be purchased abroad. The drought has made it impossible to sow 20,000 dunams of summer crops in the Negev, which involves a loss of 4,000 tons of grain fodder worth about ILm.

Two Lebanese Charges Against Israel

The Lebanese Government has lodged two complaints against Israel with the Israel-Lebanon Mixed Armistice Commission, the Arab News Agency reports from Beirut. The complaints concern the alleged kidnapping of a Lebanese citizen from Ain al-Habab village, near the armistice line, and the theft of 180 head of sheep.

Decision Taken On Egyptian Republic

The 50-member subcommittee of the Egyptian Council which is drafting the country's new constitution has unanimously decided that the country's future regime should be a republic instead of a monarchy. NEADS reports from Cairo. The decision will be put to the full Council for approval.

Eisenhower and Churchill Talk on Soviet Peace Moves

Jebb Appeals for Cold War's End

UNITED NATIONS, Wednesday (UP). — Britain called upon Russia and her Communist partners today to "make it clear by deeds that the climate is changing" in the cold war. But the British delegate, Sir Gladwyn Jebb, cautioned the U.N. against over-optimism.

'Formosa Can Invade China Without U.S.'

UNITED NATIONS, Wednesday (Reuters). — Chinese Nationalist delegate Dr. Chu Ming-chang told the Political Committee today that his Government would "liberate" the Chinese mainland on its own initiative.

He said that the Nationalists were determined to recover their lost territories and believed they had the support of the Chinese people. His Government had no need of assistance from the U.S., he said.

Dr. Chu was replying to Czechoslovak charges that the U.S. was financing and conducting espionage and sabotage against the Chinese People's Republic.

It was announced in Hangzhou tonight that Burma has lodged a complaint with the U.N. charging aggression against her by Nationalist China. A cable to Secretary General Trygve Lie said that there were about 15,000 Chinese Nationalist troops on Burmese soil. It asked for the complaint to be heard during the current session of the Assembly.

Clark Calls on Chiang

TAIPEH, Formosa, Wednesday (AP). — General Mark Clark, U.N. Commander in Korea, arrived here today and spent 45 minutes conferring with Chiang Kai-shek.

The subject of the conference was not disclosed, but its length was far beyond that of a courtesy call. Social functions and further conferences are scheduled.

Mayer to Begin Talks Today in Washington

NEW YORK, Wednesday (Reuters). — Premier Rene Mayer arrived here today from Paris for consultations with the Government.

Conferences are due to start tomorrow. The two main topics will be the war in Indo-China and the European Army.

Officials here listed six topics for discussion:

- 1) European defense with specific reference to the importance of the European Defense Community;
- 2) General European political and military problems;
- 3) A general review of Far East problems with specific reference to Korea and Indo-China;
- 4) European economic integration;
- 5) Problems arising in the European payments union; and
- 6) Budgetary financial problems confronting both governments in their joint efforts to make the maximum contribution to the defense of freedom and in the Far East.

TOO BUSY TO WAGE WAR, SAYS MOSCOW

LONDON, Wednesday (UP). — The Soviet Union is so busy with civilian projects of home that it simply could not begin to prepare for war, Moscow Radio said today.

In a broadcast monitored here the commentator stressed again Russia's desire for peace and said that the nation's economic policy at this stage made war next to impossible. He said Russia has been cutting consumer prices ever since World War II and is striving to double "real earnings" by 1958.

Approach Through Neutral Channels

LONDON, Wednesday (UP). — Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Dwight Eisenhower have been in close consultation on Russia's latest peace feelers, reliable sources said here today.

Both Britain and America are awaiting concrete evidence of the Kremlin's change of policy before abandoning their front of scepticism and deciding on future moves, these sources state.

Meanwhile, the return to Stockholm of the Swedish Ambassador to Moscow, Rolf Sohlman, touched off a wave of speculation today that Russia might seek an informal approach to the West through neutral channels. Mr. Sohlman has officially stated that he was returning home for a long-planned visit. But, coming at the height of Premier Malenkov's campaign for "co-existence," his journey has encouraged speculation in Western circles that the neutral diplomats might throw authoritative light on the motives and aims of Moscow's peace offensive.

Qualified Observer
The speculation is encouraged by press reports from Moscow today that the Ambassador's background and experience and his contacts with diplomats in Moscow (he is cousin of the diplomatic corps) make him one of the best-qualified observers and advisers on Soviet affairs.

At the same time, there is growing belief that Russia's chief U.N. delegate and Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Andre Vishinsky, may carry new proposals to the General Assembly session.

Correspondents in Moscow have been stressing the marked cooperation of Soviet officials in day-to-day dealings with Western representatives. Russian broadcasts are also giving great play to the "co-existence" motif.

But whatever politicians or commentators may think about a new Soviet approach, the British Government appears unmoved so far by Soviet words and refuses to be shaken out of its scepticism.

Official hesitation is prompted by fear that the campaign may be designed to lure the West into a sense of illusory security or as to slow down its defence effort and drive a wedge between the U.S. and Britain and Western Europe.

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